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# Inscriptions

IN THE FIRST

## "OLD COHANSEY" BURYING GROUND

Hopewell

Cumberland County New Jersey

WITH A

## HISTORICAL SKETCH

COMPILED BY

FRANK D. ANDREWS

*Secretary Vineland Historical and Antiquarian Society*

VINELAND NEW JERSEY

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## P R E F A C E .

A visit to the old burying ground near Sheppard's Mill is not without interest to those who care for the past. Lying just beneath our feet as we reverently move among the graves are the remains of men and women who once peopled this part of the county. They were tenderly laid in this secluded spot so long ago, that no one comes here to weep over their graves and are quite forgotten by the present generation who never knew them.

What stories could they tell; these silent sleepers lying here, of life in old colonial times; when the Indian dwelt by the running brook and hunted the deer in the forest. When the country was new and homes in "Old Cohansey" were won through toil and struggle, when a living faith and hope of a better life led these men and women to the church in the grave yard, where sustained and comforted by the preacher's word, they endured the privation, sickness and death that came at last to all.

What tales could they relate, living under kingly rule, of British oppression and unjust taxation; of the love of country, of liberty, of independence, of the long years of war; with sorrow, sickness or death in every household, of victory at last, of peace and happy homes.

In the thicket where the holly grows, the stream still flows onward to the river, unmindful of the changes since the church folk at the noontide hour slacked their thirst with its waters, while near at hand was the church where they heard of the living waters that satisfieth the soul

Within this enclosure they laid their loved ones, here they too found rest, each in their narrow cell. Surely, this is hallowed ground and sacred to their memory.

FRANK D. ANDREWS.

VINELAND, N. J.

February 22, 1911.



## HISTORICAL SKETCH.

One of the old burying grounds of Cumberland County in which burials ceased long ago, is located in the township of Hopewell not far from the Greenwich line, and about one mile from Cohansey River. Sheppard's Mill station on the New Jersey Central Railroad is less than half a mile distant.

The church known as the "First Cohansey Baptist Church," which once stood near the centre of the present enclosure, was the result of a compromise between the early Baptist settlers who located about 1683 at Shrewsbury Neck; on the south side of Cohansey River and those who settled in 1685 on the north side, near the present site of Bowentown.

Rev. Thomas Killingsworth, an Englishman of unusual attainments was pastor over the settlers on the south side of the river, while Rev. Timothy Brooks was the leader on the north side, two societies, each with a house of worship, so they continued until the death of Mr. Killingsworth in 1709, when the congregations were induced to unite.

The members agreed upon a new site, that of the present grave yard as the most convenient; with Mr. Brooks as minister. Here about 1714 a church was erected. Mr. Brooks died two years later and the church was supplied once a month from Cape May.

Rev. William Butcher was ordained as pastor in 1721, dying after a short pastorate, December 12, 1724.

Rev. Nathaniel Jenkins of Cape May, after supplying the church again for six years, was settled in 1730. He was a man of superior education and talents, active in the affairs of church and state. During his ministry the church grew in numbers and influence, a new and larger house of worship was built in 1741, and the lot surrounding it dedicated to the burial of the dead. On the 2d of June 1754, Mr. Jenkins ceased his earthly labors, much lamented.

Rev. Robert Kelsey, an Irishman by birth, succeeded Mr. Jenkins in 1756. He is said to have been "a man of genial character, witty and instructive in conversation, fervent in piety, orthodox in doctrines and faithful in labor." Through his records we have some knowledge regarding the affairs of the church during his ministry.

He died May 30, 1789, in the 79th year of his age and is buried in the church yard.

Rev. William Rogers supplied the church after Mr. Kelsey's death. He was a graduate of Rhode Island College 1769, a professor in the College of Philadelphia while serving the church here. His is one of the prominent names we meet with among the many who ministered to the people of West Jersey. It is reported twenty-three were baptised during the two years following the death of Mr. Kelsey.

Rev. Henry Smalley took charge of the church July 3d 1790. He was a recent graduate of the College of New Jersey and entered upon his work with commendable zeal, good judgement and an earnest lofty purpose. It was during his pastorate a more convenient site was secured and a substantial brick church erected at Roadstown, about two miles northwest of the former location, this church was dedicated in 1802.



The old house of worship was offered to the Baptists of Fairfield Township if they would place it in repair and make use of it.

One circumstance connected with the old church is worthy of notice in that period, when, during the winter clergymen preached in overcoat and mittens, while the congregation shivered and shook with the cold; we have the authority of Rev. Morgan Edwards that the church had a stove as early as 1789.

Mr. Smalley's pastorate lasted forty-nine years when he was called to his reward. The church at Roadstown still stands, a fine example of the churches of the early nineteenth century. Close by is a well filled grave yard over a century old.

In the old grave yard, the inscriptions from whose stones will be found in the following pages, is the burial place of the first white female born in Cohansey. Another interesting stone is that of Lieutenant Mulford, whose life was a sacrifice to the cause of American liberty.

Quaint and curious are many of the inscriptions to our eyes, but the same love and tenderness for the dead was shown then as now; when the mystery surrounding the change we call death seems as difficult of solution as ever.

## N O T E .

In copying the time worn stones, a few mistakes were unavoidable. These the compiler has been able to correct through the courtesy of Mr. Charles E. Sheppard of Bridgeton, who more than a generation ago transcribed the names and dates. From Mr. Sheppard's manuscript two or three names and several initials have been incorporated in the list, to be found at the close of the inscriptions on page seventeen.

### Corrections.

Rebecca Bacon, Rebecca H Bacon.

William Bacon, 49 years, instead of 40 years.

Elijah Bowen, Dec 21, instead of Dec 25.

Jonathan Bowen, October 10, instead of 25.

Lucy wife of Daniel Bowen, 1775 instead of 1773.

Jacob Harris, June 8, instead of June 3.

Sarah wife of Samuel Harris, 1761 instead of 1763.

## INSCRIPTIONS

In The  
FIRST "OLD COHANSEY" BURYING GROUND,  
Near Sheppard's Mill,  
HOPEWELL,  
Cumberland County, New Jersey.

Copied, November 11, 1909.

By  
F. D. & B. A. Andrews.

—x—

In Memory of CORNELIUS AUSTIN who  
died May 26th 1796 Aged 5 years 7 months  
& 12 Days

In memory of ABEL BACON who departed  
this life Feb y 9 1804 Aged 44 years 11 months  
& 4 days

When Christ who is our life  
Shall appear then shall we also  
appear with him in Glory

REBECCA BACON Wife of Abel Bacon  
who departed this life June 17th 1801 aged  
36 years

Her glass is run she sleeps in clay  
Untill the Resurrection day

In memory of ISAAC BACON who died  
April 12th 1854 in the 78th year of his age

In memory of Sarah the Wife of Daniel  
Bacon who departed this Life Decem r 8th 1791  
Aged 20 years And 3 months

In Memory of TABITHA BACON who  
departed this Life March the 11th 1800 in  
the 64 year of her Age

In memory of WILLIAM BACON who de-  
parted this Life 15th Sept 1782 Aged 40 years  
& 10 months

In memory of RICHARD BARKER who died  
January the 27th 1765 aged 50 years

ELIJAH BOWEN Died Dec 25 1785 Aged 51  
years

MARY Wife of Elijah Bowen a sincere chris-  
tian departed this Life October 13 1770 aged  
36 years

JONATHAN BOWEN ESQ departed this  
Life October 19 1782 Aged 68 years

My Flesh shall rest in Hope  
When CHRIST who is our  
Life shall appear  
Then shall ye also  
Appear with him in GLORY

PHEBIE BROOKS Died the 25 July 1756  
aged 3 years

In memory of ELIZABETH BROWN who  
departed this Life September the 9th 1784 In  
the 62d year of her age

In memory of JACOB BROWN who  
died April 30th 1791 Aged 56 years

In Memory of      LUCY Wife of      David Bowen  
Esq      Who departed this Life      Aug 10th 1775  
In the 31 year of      Her Age

She

—— bowed her Head to Death  
At the kind call of JESUS her dear  
LORD & master  
Being well assured as she expressed  
Her self just before she left the world  
That to die would be her Gain  
As she lived the Life of the Righteous so  
She died the death of the Righteous  
And as a humble and sincere Christian  
Knowing as her Redemption drew nigh  
She——resigned to the will of GOD  
She——intreated her dear  
Friends not to mourn on her Account  
Truth not flattery speaking ore her DUST  
Would rank her Name among the GOOD and JUST  
Testify that tho' short her span  
In virtnes sacred cause her Race she ran  
Struck by the Hand of Death in——Bosom  
Lo truth and virtue shut into the Tomb  
But now Dear Friend Earths seeming joys Dispise  
And seek a lasting Treasure in the Sky

In memory of      JOHN DOWDNEY      who departed  
this Life      February 19th      1758      Aged 57  
years

In memory of      JACOB HARRIS who      Died  
June 8th 1761 in ye      34 year of his Age

In      Memory of      JACOB HARRIS      who de-  
parted this      Life Feby 13th 1798      in the 47th year  
of his Age

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In Memory of James Harris who departed  
this Life Decr 18th 1795 in the 8th year of his  
age

In Memory of MARY HARRIS who de-  
parted this Life September the 13th 1800  
Aged 17 years

SAMUEL HARRIS departed this Life the  
16th Day of January 1773 In the 77 year of  
his Age

In memory of SARAH wife of SAMUEL  
HARRIS who Died June 16th 1768 Aged 64  
years

In memory of LYDIA WIFE of JONA-  
THAN HOLMES who Departed This Life  
Sept 19th 1799 AGED 22 YEARS & 10 Months

Here lieth ROBERT HOOD who died March  
ye 10 1761 in the 71 year of his age

In memory of ANN wife of Obed Hudson  
who departed this Life January 30th 1786 Aged  
31 years

To Day ye will hear  
His voice Harden not your  
HEARTS

In memory of Mary Hudson who died April  
19 1777 Aged 13 months

In memory of RACHEL HUDSON who died  
march 30 1786 Aged 4 months and 18 Days

In memory of ANN wife of HENRY HUSTED  
who died March 4th 1796 In the 31st year  
of her Age

In memory of Rebecca Wife of Henry Husted  
who died Aug 13th 1799 In the 24th year  
of her Age

In memory of PHILAH HUSTED WIFE  
of Daniel Husted who departed this life Febr ry  
27th 1800 Aged 34 Years

In memory of DAVID IRELAN who departed  
this Life Nov r the 12th 1781 in the 38th year  
of his Age

In memory of HENRY JELLEY who de-  
parted this life May 1st 1777 in the 50th year of  
His Age Who left a Donation To this Church

In memory of MARY wife of Henry Jelley  
who departed this Life May 10th 1777  
in the 60th year of her Age

In  
memory of  
The  
Revd ROBERT KELSEY  
who departed this Life  
May the 30th 1789  
Aged 78 years  
Minister of this Church  
33 Years

In memory of  
MIRIAM the wife of  
the Revd  
ROBERT KELSEY  
who died January the 8th  
1785  
Aged 62 Years

In memory of JACOB LUDLAM who departed  
this life Jan 14th 1795 Aged 43 years

In memory of RACHEL Wife of Jacob  
Ludlam who departed this Life July 30th 1793  
in the 36 year of her Age

In memory of NORTON LUDLAM who  
Departed this Life November 5th 1791 In the  
39th year of his Age

In memory of Providence Ludlam who departed this life July the 5th 1792 in the 67th year of His Age

In memory of SALE Y wife of Providence Ludlam who died March 11th 1782 Aged 49 years

In Memory of BENJAMIN MULFORD who departed this Life Sept 1<sup>st</sup> 1784  
 He Liv'd to see  
 near forescore years  
 And bow'd his head  
 To Death

In memory of CYNTHIA wife of Henry Mulford who departed this Life 10th Feby 1785  
 Aged 22 years  
 Snatch'd off by Death that ruth less foe  
 To every social bliss  
 No tender ties could stay the blow  
 So frail a life is this

In memory of DAVID MULFORD  
 Lieutenant of the Greenwich Militia who fell in a skirmish with the Hessians near Haddonfield in the STATE of NEW JERSEY in the year 1777 Aged 29 years

In memory of ISAAC MULFORD who departed this life November 20 1776 in the 38 year of his Age

Blessed are the Dead which  
 die in the LORD yea saith the  
 SPIRIT that they may rest from  
 their Labors and their work  
 do follow them



"OLD COHANSEY" BURYING GROUND" 13

In memory of            MARTHA wife of            Isaac  
Mulford      who died October 15      1768      Aged 26  
years

Her Glass is run she sleeps in Clay  
Until the Resurrection Day

In memory of            OBADIAH ROBINS            who de-  
parted this Life      the 24th of Feb y 1775      Aged 67  
years

In memory of            ANANIAS SAYRE Jun      who  
departed this Life      January 19th 1772      Aged 44  
years

In Memory of            HANNAH the wife of      Ananias  
Sayre Jun r      who departed this Life      February 19  
1769      Aged 38 years

In Memory of            HANNAH the last wife      of  
Ananias Sayre Jun r      who departed this Life  
August 13th 1771      Aged 24 years

In memory of            HENRY SAYRE      who departed  
this Life      September 29th 1772      Aged 17 years

In Memory of            LYDIA SAYRE      who departed  
this Life      August 14 1773      Aged 6 years

In      memory of            ICHABOD SHIPAR D  
who Departed this Life      On the 22nd Day of  
April 1799 Aged      29 years 4 months      and 11 days

I was a native of this place  
when Death did me Arest  
God called me home in  
prime of Life  
Because he thought it best

Thomas      Sheperd      died June ye 18 1747  
Aged 33 years

In memory of            Enoch Shepherd      who departed  
this life      July 24 1769      in the 59th year      of his  
age

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RACHEL the wife of Enoch Shepherd  
departed this Life July 26th 1756 in the 43 year  
of her age

In memory of PHOEBE wife of DAVID  
SHEPPARD who died Jan y 22 1799 Aged 32  
years

Jesus submits to his Fathers hands  
And bows his head and dies  
So all his followers die  
To take the virturous Prize

ELIZABETH SHEPPARD died  
December 14th 1802 Aged 21 years

In memory of EPHRAIM SHEPPARD  
who departed this Life the 8th day of May 1783  
Aged 60 years

In memory of SARAH wife of Ephraim  
Sheppard who died January 21 1777 Aged  
51 years

In memory of EPHRAIM SHEPPARD  
Born Aug 15 1801 Died July 9 1848

In memory of HANNAH wife of  
HARVEY SHEPPARD who departed this Life  
June the 11th 1800 Aged 24 Years

In memory of Ichabod Sheppard son of  
Wm & Matilda Sheppard who departed this Life  
October 16th 1805 Aged one Year nine Months  
& Fifteen Days

In memory of SARAH wife of ISAAC  
SHEPPARD who departed this Life Dec 8th 1797  
in the 32 year of her Age

JOHN SHEPPARD died April 27th 1802  
Aged 26 years

In Memory of PHILIP SHEPPARD who  
departed this life Jan'y 5th 1797 Aged 76 Years

He was a kind Husband  
an indulgent Parent  
& a sincere Christian

In memory of Prudence wife of NATHAN  
SHEPPARD who Died 5 March 1786 Aged 44  
Years

Precious in the sight of the  
Lord is the Death of his Saints

In memory of William Fox Smalley Son of  
Henry & Hannah Smalley who departed this  
April 30th 1801 Aged 3 Years 5 months and 14  
days

Short yet how pleasing  
Was his visit here  
How soon removed  
To fill a noble Sphere

In memory of ISAAC SMITH who departed  
this life April 9th 1797 in the 53d year of  
his Age

In memory of CYNTHIA wife of ISAAC  
SMITH who departed this Life 20th of Dec r  
1785 in the 37 year of her Age

In memory of ISAAC son of Is & Miriam  
Smith who died Died Dec 22d 1791 Aged  
11 months

In memory of HANNAH wife of JOSEPH  
SMITH who departed this Life April 17th 1755  
in the 28th year of her Age

In memory of  
 DEBORAH SWINNEY  
 who departed this Life  
 the 4th Day of April  
 1760  
 In the 77th Year  
 of her Age  
 She was the first White  
 Female Child born  
 in Cohansey  
 daughter of John Smith  
 & wife of John Swinney

In memory of JOHN SWINNEY Sen r who  
 departed this Life 1756 In the 79 year of  
 his age

In memory of LYDIA WAITMAN  
 who departed this Life the 2nd of April 1781  
 Aged 48 years

In memory of JOB WARE who departed  
 this life March 19th 1806 Aged 45 years 3  
 months and 15 days

In memory of HANNAH WARE who depar-  
 ted this Life June the 29th 1800 Aged 31  
 years

**I** was a native of this place  
 When death did me arest  
 God call'd me home in prime of life  
 Because he thought it best

In memory of JOHN WARE who departed  
 this Life April 14 1773 in the 51st year of  
 his Age

In memory of ANNA wife of JOHN WARE  
 who departed this Life Nov r 7th 1793 in the  
 60th year of her age

In memory of MRS MARGERET WARE  
the affectionate wife of John Ware who departed  
this Life Decem r 27th 1798 Aged 33 years

She was a kind mother and a good  
neighbor whose death was much  
lamented by all who knew her  
Her mind was tranquil and serene  
No terrors in her looks were seen  
A saviours smile dispel'd the gloom  
And smooth'd her passage to the Tomb

Elizabeth ware [A child grave beside the above.]

In memory of PHEBE wife of Daniel  
Wescot who departed this life October 15th 1798  
in the 35th year of her Age

Her Glass is run She Sleeps in Clay  
Untill the Resurrection day

In memory of Henry Wescoat who departed  
this Life Dec r 28th 1796 aged 35 year

Precious in the sight of the Lord  
is the death of his Saints

In memory of JANE wife of Henry  
Wescott and late wife of Isaac Sheppard who  
departed this life July 16th 1803 in the 36th  
year of her age

On small stones are inscribed names or initials as follows:

A B	E B	M B 44 1791	RB 1775	S B
Isaac Davis 1790	R D	Hannah Heaton	A J	
1772	Mary Kelsey 1767	D K	M K	
Wm K	P L	S L	J M	Ambrose Ree(d) 1750
A S 1795	C S	Joel Sheppard died	1796	
M S 1735	N S	ISAAC WATSON		
ISAAC WATSON	NORTON WATSON			

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